

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4801

S E C R E T BANGKOK 10934

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, ASEC, TH

SUBJECT: US-RTG CRISIS CONSULTATION

DEPT PASS SECDEF AND CINCPAC

1. I CONSIDER IT SIGNIFICANT THAT GENERAL KRIS SIVARA TOOK INITIATIVE TO CALL AND CONSULT WITH ME AT MIDNIGHT CRISIS POINT WHEN HE HAD INITIATED MOVES TO RESTORE ORDER IN BANGKOK UNDER HIS PEACEKEEPING AUTHORITY. HE CALLED IN PART TO REASSURE ME PERSONALLY THAT HE WAS NOT MOVING IN ANY EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL WAY, BUT WITH RESTRAINT AND ONLY AS REQUIRED BY THE SITUATION. HE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR TO MEE THAT HE WANTED REASSURANCE OF OUR UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT AND CONSIDERED IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE HAD BEEN CONSULTED. THIS IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE CLOSE RELATIONS PERSISTING BETWEEN KEY THAI LEADERS AND THE UNITED STATES AND THEIR RELIANCE ON US AT TIME OF CRISIS.

2. I ALSO FIND IT HEARTENING THAT MFA UNDER SECRETARY PHAEN CALLED IN EARLY MORNING HOURS TO ALERT US TO PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT AND EXPLAIN ITS PURPOSE TO PREVENT MISINTERPRETATION. WE KNOW THAT HE ALSO CALLED SOME OTHER EMBASSIES, AT LEAST OF COUNTRIES CONSIDERED CLOSE ALLIES AND SUPPORTERS.

3. THE CHINATOWN RIOTS HAVE DIVERTED ATTENTION FROM THE
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STUDENT EFFORTS TO STIMULATE ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS

OVER THE FOURTH OF JULY PERIOD. WE HAD RECEIVED OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM PRIME MINISTERSANYA AND FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN IN STATEMENTS TO PRESS AND STUDENTS INTENDED TO DEFLECT ANY DISRUPTION OF OUR NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION IN BANGKOK. FRIDAY MORNING PAPERS CARRY BALANCED REPORTS OF MY RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERIES AT FOURTH OF JULY VIN D'HONNEUR ACKNOWLEDGING RIGHT OF STUDENTS TO VOICE THEIR OPINIONS IN FREE THAI SOCIETY, COUPLED WITH STATEMENT BY FONMIN CHARUNPHAN DISSOCIATING STUDENT PROTEST FROM RTG POLICY.

4. WHILE WE CAN EXPECT REVIVAL OF THE DEBATE ON THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN COMING DAYS, IT IS CLEAR THAT WE HAVE SOLID UNDERSTANDING OF RTG LEADERSHIP ON ESSENTIAL MATTERS.

AT THE SAME TIME OUR THAI CONTACTS HAVE GIVEN US CLEAR SIGNALS THAT THEY ARE RELIEVED THAT WE ARE NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAY IN THE RIOTS WHICH CAUSED THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN BANGKOK, AND WANT TO KEEP THE UNITED STATES CLEARLY SEPARTED FROM THEIR IMMEDIATE POLICE PROBLEM IN THE CAPITAL CITY.

KINTNER

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